

April 2, 2009 **OBEY ANNOUNCES RECOVERY ACT**

FUNDS FOR WISCONSIN HEAD START PROGRAMS WASHINGTON, D.C.

- Congressman Dave Obey (D-WI) announced today that Wisconsin will receive nearly \$10 million from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) to help existing Head Start programs increase staff salaries and improve their programs. As Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee, Obey was a lead author of the recovery act.

"Helping kids succeed in life is probably the most fundamental, long term economic stimulus possible," Obey said. "And in this time of Wall Street corporate failures getting six figure bonuses, I'm glad to see people working in Head Start to help kids get ahead in life getting a raise too."

Head Start provides grants to local agencies, including non-profit organizations, schools, and community action commissions, to provide comprehensive child development services to economically disadvantaged children and families, with a special focus on helping preschoolers develop the early reading and math skills they need to be successful in school. In Wisconsin there are over 50 Head Start programs serving over 16,000 children with more than 3,000 staff.

Existing Wisconsin Head Start Programs are set to receive a total of \$4,464,745 for Cost of Living Adjustments and \$5,256,782 for Quality Improvement. COLA increases are intended to pay for higher operating costs and to increase staff salaries. Quality Improvement funds are intended to help Head Start staff improve personal training and development, and improve program quality, including extended hours, better facilities, and enhanced services.

More information on the federal Head Start Program can be found at:

<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ohs/>

More information on Head Start in Wisconsin can be found at:

<http://www.whsaonline.org/>

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